PREV

CENTERPIECE SPOTLIGHT

Lucie Tiger O'Connor: 'Found My Home' in Florence

NEXT

By Chelsea Rutherford Staff Writer Nov 26, 2023 0

Lucie Tiger O'Connor moved to the Shoals after falling in love with the area during her first visit in 2019. [COURTESY PHOTO]

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UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

NOV. 27 — 8 p.m. at Lava Room, 116 W Mobile St. in Florence

DEC. 5 — 7:30 p.m. at Swampers Bar & Grill, 10 Hightower Pl in Florence

DEC. 12 — 7:30 p.m. at Swampers Bar & Grill, 10 Hightower Pl in Florence

DEC. 28 — 6 p.m. at Lost Pizza Co. Shoals, 201 N. Seminary St. in Florence

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WANT TO LISTEN?

WHAT: Lucie Tiger's new cover, "Shake the Frost," was originally recorded by Tyler Childers.

RELEASE DATE: Friday, Dec. 1

WHERE TO LISTEN: Spotify

INFORMATION: Find Lucie Tiger's recent cover, her original songs, and a list of upcoming performances at lucietigermusic.com.

Lucie Tiger O'Connor is finding her way as a musician in the Shoals.

A native of Sydney, Australia, the young singer-songwriter, known on stage simply by Lucie Tiger, said she fell in love with the Tennessee Valley on her first visit in 2019.

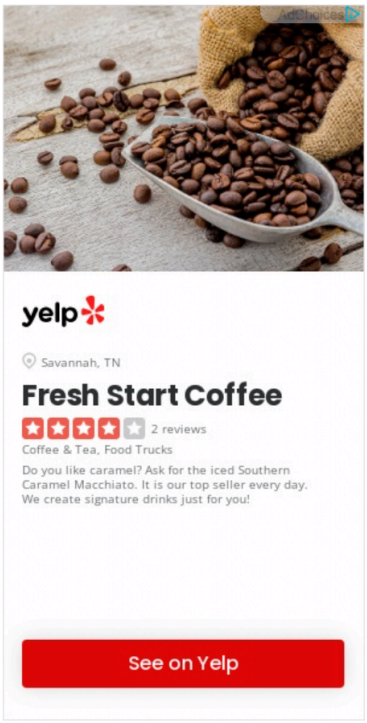
"So many of my favorite records came out of the Shoals," O'Connor said. "I love the Boz Skaggs record with Duane Allman. Like, "Loan Me a Dime' is a huge favorite. I'm a huge Rolling Stones fan as well. I loved that they came out here and they cut three songs at Jackson Highway. When I learned that they all recorded here, it was always in the back of my mind — Muscle Shoals, Alabama. I wonder what that place was like."

She said she'd already booked the trip with her mom, Zena O'Connor, and the pair had planned stops in Chicago, Nashville, and Clarksdale, Mississippi. As soon as she realized Muscle Shoals was only two hours from Nashville, she knew she wanted to add the city to their itinerary.

Four years later, she would relocate to Florence to follow in the steps of some of her favorite artists.

She's since released around 20 songs that were each recorded at FAME Studio or East Avalon Recorders Studio in Muscle Shoals.

"We booked a session at FAME, and the engineer, John (Gifford III), was like, 'Do you want some of the players to play on the songs with you?' I'd never done anything like that before," said O'Connor, explaining that most songs she'd recorded back home weren't engineered live with a session band.



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Rather, in Australia she would come to the studio to record her vocals over pre-recorded music tracks.

“Drums and bass come first, then guitar, then keys, and then vocals. It’s very time consuming,” O’Connor said. “I think it takes the joy out of everything.

“I mean, it works really well for some people. Some people really vibe off that way of doing it. I’m not one of those people. I like it when we’re all in the room and someone plays something, and I can look at them and be like, ‘Yes! That was so good!’”

O’Connor said she’s thrived in those studio experiences with Gifford, Bob Wray, Justin Holder, Will McFarlane and Brad Kuhn.

“It doesn’t feel like a singer and session players. It feels like a band,” she said. “There are no big egos in the room. There’s no one like sort of taking over. Everyone has great ideas, and they just work together.”

Since O’Connor began working in the Shoals, she said she’s also fallen in love with the slower pace and friendliness of the area.

“I basically grew up and lived in the Australian version of New York. It was so busy, so noisy, and everyone is in a rush. Everyone is trying to get somewhere, and they don’t care about what you’re doing. There’s no consideration. You know, I just think no one is really looking out for each other,” she said.

“From an outsider’s perspective, almost everything about this place is fantastic. So much is different. I love it here.”

O’Connor has experienced some success since she began recording with Wray and the other session musicians. Her original song, “Gasoline,” won Best Country Blues Song of the Year in 2021 at the Tamworth Songwriters Festival.

Another song she wrote, “Found My Home,” rose to number 50 on the MusicRow Country Breakout Chart after its release in July 2021.

O’Connor is also the only independent Australian artist to have singles make the MusicRow Country Breakout Chart in the last two years.

“It’s all about this place and how I fell in love with it,” the rising artist said about the “Found My Home” single.

“There is a heap of Easter eggs in the lyrics. Someone commented, I think on the music video, that it’s geographically incorrect, but it’s not. I think what they were talking about is when in the verse I say, ‘Found fame in Florence.’ Technically, FAME is in Muscle Shoals. I know that, but FAME was originally in Florence. It’s actually an acronym for Florence Alabama Music Enterprises. I kind of did a deep cut on that one.”

This December, O’Connor will release a cover of Tyler Childers’ “Shake the Frost.”

“I love that song, and I think we did the most beautiful version of it,” O’Connor said. “Whilst I usually always release songs that I have written myself, ‘Shake The Frost’ is an absolute favorite of mine. We cut it at East Avalon Recorders back in April of this year. It’s a really beautiful, nostalgic song and I thought it would be a perfect release for the holiday season.”

O’Connor said she’s also excited about the coming year, as she plans to release a few other singles that were recorded recently in the Shoals. She said she also plans to go on tour sometime after the new year.

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